

DIOCESE OF MONMOUTH

North Monmouthshire Ministry Area

Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District

PROFILE



*Our churches and communities.
Our hopes and aspirations.
The kind of priest we seek.
What we can offer our new priest.*



DIOCESE OF MONMOUTH

NORTH MONMOUTHSHIRE MINISTRY AREA

Introduction from the

Archdeacon of Monmouth, The Venerable Ian Rees

Thank you for taking the time to look at this profile. We are seeking to appoint a House for Duty Priest Team Priest for the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area based in the beautiful village of Llanddewi Rhydderch.

This post will offer a role as part of a Ministry Team serving a new Ministry Area. It offers an exciting opportunity to work collaboratively with lay and ordained colleagues. The churches where you will primarily be based have worked together for a number of years and we imagine that the close relationship between them will continue whilst they also become active participants in the wider Ministry Area. The Ministry Area is served currently by two committed and active stipendiary priests as well as other ordained and lay ministers and we hope that the teamwork already happening in the area will continue to grow.

This Ministry area has some magnificent history which, given its beauty as well, makes this a very attractive place to minister and live. The people are warm, welcoming and have a genuine desire to grow the Kingdom of God. As a Diocese we are also committed to help Ministry Areas to grow and in 2022, we launched a new Diocesan Vision, some details of which are included at the back of the profile.

For an informal conversation or further information please contact the Ministry Area Leader, The Revd Julian Gray on 01873 859881 or mardyvicarage@yahoo.co.uk

With my best wishes

Ian Rees

The North Monmouthshire Ministry Area. The North Monmouthshire Ministry Area was commissioned in January 2023. The move to Ministry Areas in the Diocese of Monmouth (and in the Church in Wales more widely) is an exciting venture, aimed at establishing sustainable opportunities for ministry and mission locally. We are working to do this in North Monmouthshire through the mutual sharing of gifts and resources, both human and material, among our seventeen churches.

The Ministry Area is geographically large and, apart from the suburb of Mardy on the northern outskirts of Abergavenny, it is mostly rural and sparsely populated. To enable the Ministry Area to work effectively, it has been sub-divided into five Pastoral Districts, each of which has several constituent congregations, led by a Team Vicar.

The Pastoral Districts correspond to the five benefices that merged to form the Ministry Area. In this way, relationships between churches, congregations and communities that had been forged, in many cases, over several decades will be maintained. However, a very important aim, also, will be to nurture a new sense of belonging and identity as part of the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area. This poses some challenges to our churches, pastoral districts and congregations that, until now, have largely functioned independently of each other. However, we are beginning to realise the advantages of the interdependence that belonging to a Ministry Area can offer, and the opportunities it provides for a new partnership in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus to our communities.

The five Pastoral Districts of the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area are as follows:

Crucorney Pastoral District. St. David Llanthony, St. Martin Cwmyoy, St. Michael Llanfihangel Crucorney. *House for Duty Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility: The Revd. David Roberts.*

Grosmont & Skenfrith Pastoral District. St. Nicholas Grosmont, St. Bride Skenfrith, St. Mary Llanfair, St. Cadoc Llangattock Lingoed, *Stipendiary Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility: The Revd. Gaynor Burrett.*

Llantilio Crossenny Pastoral District. St. Teilo Llantilio Crossenny, St. Cadoc Penrhos, St. James Llanvetherine, St. Mabli Llanvapley. *House for Duty Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility: The Revd. Heidi Prince.*

Llantilio Pertholey and Llanddewi Skirrid Pastoral District. St Teilo Llantilio Pertholey, Bettws Chapel, St. David, Llanddewi Skirrid. *Stipendiary Team Rector with pastoral responsibility: The Revd. Julian Gray.*

Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District. St. David Llanddewi Rhydderch, St. Bridget Llansantffraed with Llanarth, St. Cadoc Llangattock-juxta-Usk (known as 'The Bryn') *House for Duty Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility: position currently vacant.*

Oversight for the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area is provided by the Team Rector with the Team Vicar for each Pastoral District serving as its focal pastor. Additionally, there is a self-supporting Associate Priest, The Revd. Mary Moore who is currently based in the Grosmont Pastoral District, and several Assistant Priests with permission to officiate serving mainly in their respective Pastoral Districts. The Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District has attached to it a Licensed Lay Minister who will assist the appointed Team Vicar.

There is a single governing body known as the Ministry Area Council (MAC), responsible for the whole Ministry Area. However, each church has its own Committee for its day to day running and each church is encouraged to have representation on the MAC, with the Team Rector and Vicars being ex-officio members. Each Pastoral District is being encouraged to develop a Local Ministry Team. These local teams will be supported by the Team Rector, Team Vicars and a Ministry Area Support Officer.

Ministry Area Team Vicar for the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District. A vacancy currently exists for a Ministry Area Team Vicar (house for duty) with responsibility for the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District. We seek a prayerful pastor of spiritual maturity who will minister to the churches and closely-knit communities of this beautiful part of the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area. A heart for rural ministry would be essential, together with a willingness to engage with the community and become an integral part of it.

Although the primary task of the new Vicar will be to care for the congregations, churches and communities of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District, the appointee would also be licenced to the whole Ministry Area and would also be expected work alongside the Team Rector, fellow Team Vicars and other colleagues, both clerical and lay, to help build and develop the Ministry Area and its potential for outreach and mission. This team also has the aim of creating mutual support for one another.

The Team Vicar at Llanddewi Rhydderch would be expected to offer three days of ministry per week consisting of a Sunday and two weekdays. Part of that commitment would be to the wider North Monmouthshire Ministry Area. Although mostly leading worship in the churches of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District, the appointee would also be occasionally called upon to lead worship elsewhere in the Ministry Area.

We seek a Priest who will be:

- ❖ **Prayerful** ~ having a deep friendship with God, someone who will nourish our own spiritual lives, and inspire the three churches of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District and join us in God's Mission.
- ❖ **Caring** ~ has a strong pastoral heart and a passion for encouraging the members of each of the congregations in discipleship, building a strong unity in Christ. To engage and support people of all ages, gender, disabilities and of all faiths and none within our communities.
- ❖ **Collaborative in nature** ~ working well both with Llanddewi Rhydderch Local Ministry Team and the wider North Monmouthshire Ministry Area Team and who can work alongside both lay and ordained colleagues. We are seeking someone who is a good team player and who will work alongside others to unite the Pastoral District and build up the Ministry Area.
- ❖ **Community focussed** ~ providing a visible presence in the Ministry Area, especially in the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District, helping us to serve our diverse communities, ministering and being a blessing all God's people who live and work within them.
- ❖ **Engaging** ~ has energy and commitment to engage with the local communities and is sympathetic to the needs of rural communities. A priest who is able to help facilitate a growth in cooperation and inter-action within our churches. To encourage and support all three churches to join together in working, playing and praying, united by God's love for each other.

We feel very strongly that ministering to a rural community is different from serving in an urban area. Many in the community see the church as *their* church, even if they only attend on 'high days and holy days.' It is very important in Llanddewi Rhydderch, where the Vicarage is situated, that strong links are maintained and continue to be developed with the village community.

There is also a closed church in the village of Llanarth, which has been integrated with St Bridget's church. Obviously, we would want our new Team Vicar to be an integral part of the community and have a ministry to both to the non-churched as well as the churched.

Within this Ministry Area we believe there is considerable scope for work with pilgrimages, as the locations offer attractive walking routes, combined with lots of history and interesting churches. We hope that our new Priest would be willing to engage with some of these ideas. Also, there is opportunity to grow as Eco-Churches. As a Diocese, we are encouraging churches to do this and this area seems a perfect place for extending that work, so a commitment to, and an interest in, this would be valuable.

As indicated earlier, you would be a part of the larger Ministry Area Team with the advantage of wider resources to call upon, together with the opportunity to work alongside colleagues, both clerical and lay, who will support, affirm, and encourage you. You would also be blessed with committed, capable and responsive congregations in all three churches of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District.

Worship. Worship in the three churches of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District can best be described as modern, moderate Catholic. Vestments are worn for the Eucharist by the celebrant and the Sacrament is reserved at St. David's Church. The Church in Wales 2004 contemporary language rite of the Eucharist is used alongside Hymns Old and New, Complete Anglican edition. Readings are from the Revised Common Lectionary three-year cycle. When Evensong is held at St. Bridget's on the first and third Sundays of each month, the more traditional 1984 Church in Wales Book of Common Prayer is used. An accomplished organist plays for the services at St. David's whilst digital hymnals provide music at St. Bridget's and St. Cadoc's.

The normal pattern of worship is as follows:

St. David's, Llanddewi Rhydderch, 9.30am Holy Eucharist every Sunday

St. Bridget's, Llansantffraed. 11.00am Holy Eucharist (second and fourth Sundays), 3.00pm Evensong (first and third Sundays).

St. Cadoc's, The Bryn. 3.00pm Holy Eucharist (second and fourth Sundays)

On a fifth Sunday, a single joint 9.30am Eucharist is celebrated at St. David's for the whole Pastoral District.

Penpergwm House and Llanarth Court Hospital. Penpergwm House is a private residential care home, situated in The Bryn. There is a well-established relationship with the local churches and the Vicar normally visits twice each month to celebrate the Eucharist with the residents. A small group of residents usually attend the evening services at St. Bridget's and St. Cadoc's. Llanarth Court is a secure psychiatric hospital and, occasionally, the Vicar is called upon to visit individual patients who have asked to see a priest.

The Vicarage. In return for your commitment to the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area and the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District, you would be provided with rent free accommodation in the 4 bedroomed Vicarage. Council Tax is paid and Expenses of Ministry, shared by the three churches (this includes water rates, phone bills and broadband in full and 25% of electricity, oil and log bills).

The Vicarage is located in the beautiful village of Llanddewi Rhydderch, some three miles from Abergavenny, off the B4233, and twenty-four miles from Hereford. It is situated in an elevated position with incredible views of Mynydd Pen-y-fâl, known locally as the Sugarloaf Mountain. The property is being totally upgraded and re-decorated before the new Team Vicar takes up post.

The house is a modern four-bedroom detached property, set in its own garden with a drive and garage. It will afford spacious, private accommodation, offering a comfortable home as well as an office for the appointee. Further details of the locality, the churches, financial information and their congregations appear in the attached Appendix 1. for the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District.



Front view of the Vicarage at Llanddewi Rhydderch



Wonderful views across north Monmouthshire towards Mynydd Pen-y-fâl (The Sugarloaf)
from the back garden of the Vicarage

APPENDIX 1

Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District: locality, churches and people

(Prepared by the Pastoral District Church Committees)

Locality. The Ministry Area covers much of the north-eastern corner of Monmouthshire. To the north is Powys and Mid Wales and, to the east, Herefordshire and the English Midlands. This is an exceptionally beautiful area sitting within the Bannau Brycheiniog / Brecon Beacons National Park. The Black Mountains, with a range of other hills, provide an ever-constant backdrop. The iconic Mynydd Pen-y-fâl (Sugarloaf Mountain) and Ysgyryd Fawr (Great Skirrid), also known locally as the Holy Mountain, are dominant local landmarks and are easily accessible.

The thriving market town of Abergavenny is less than three miles away from the village of Llanddewi Rhydderch. The town abounds in history and offers a full range of facilities with a selection of supermarkets and independent shops. It also has an abundance of coffee shops, cafes and restaurants, many with seating in the pedestrianised streets, creating a 'Café Vibe'. There is also a theatre, cinemas, music, choirs, amateur dramatic societies, sports and many other clubs and societies.

Abergavenny has excellent public transport links. It has a main line railway station with fast and frequent trains to numerous destinations in both Wales and England. London can be reached by train within two-and-a-half hours and Cardiff is a short trip away on the train, making all that the Welsh capital has to offer within easy reach.

Abergavenny is also well connected by road: north to Hereford (24 miles) and south to Newport and Cardiff and the M4 (23 miles), and east to west on the A40 to Monmouth (20 miles) and the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road, with good links further west and from the M50/M5 to Birmingham and the north.

Further afield are the other market towns of Monmouthshire, Monmouth itself, Chepstow and Usk. All are thriving commercial centres with a unique range of shops, pubs and eateries. Crickhowell and Brecon, both market towns in nearby Powys, are also well worth exploring.

Although there are no schools in the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District, children attend primary schools in Abergavenny, Raglan or Cross Ash, and senior schools in Abergavenny or Monmouth. There are Church in Wales Primary Schools in Abergavenny and Raglan.

Churches. The Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District has three beautiful and ancient churches: St David, in the village of Llanddewi Rhydderch, St. Bridget Llansantffraed with Llanarth and St. Cadoc Llangattock-juxta-Usk (The Bryn).

St David, Llanddewi Rhydderch,



The Church and Vicarage are situated in the centre of the village of Llanddewi Rhydderch, three miles from Abergavenny, off the B4233. The village has a lively community of approximately 345 people and a huge variety of activities centred around the Village Hall, including monthly Coffee Mornings, Bar Nights, a Ladies Group as well a variety of exercise classes, BBQs, concerts, Jubilee Teas and a pantomime. The villagers are also very supportive of any fundraising events for the Church.

The Church is a beautiful building, dedicated to our patron saint St David's and legend has it that he may actually have come here from nearby Llanthony during the sixth Century, establishing a monastic cell where the Church now stands. It has an unusual wooden section on the tower erected by the Normans and it's possible to see the huge oak beams in each corner of the tower. We are also fortunate to have a contemporary stained-glass window illustrating "The Tree of Life" created by the well-known artist John Petts who created many stained-glass windows including a famous window which portrayed a black Christ in Alabama after the Race Riots.



The congregation are very committed and supportive. At the moment we hold a sung Eucharist at 9.30am on the first and third Sundays in the month as well, as hosting the combined service of the three churches on any fifth Sunday. We always serve coffee and biscuits after the Eucharist, which gives us all the opportunity to chat and share any problems or issues we might be facing. This is essential in a rural area where many of us are isolated or spread out and only meet up at Church services. We are also hoping to develop a luncheon club where we can get together in a more informal setting at each other's homes.

We see the Church as an integral part of the village and the community in general, we organise an ongoing village collection for Abergavenny Foodbank, as well as serving as the collection point for Monmouthshire County Council recycling bags which helps people who don't have transport to travel into Abergavenny. We also host concerts, talks and craft sessions which are open to everyone. Fundraising activities are sometimes joint events with the village and are always well supported by everyone.

Finally, we are looking for a Vicar who is prepared to become not only a part of our church community but also a part of the community at large. We believe in the ministry of both women and men, lay and ordained and fully support the formation of Ministry Areas as a sensible step into the future of our church life and are actively involved in working groups along with representatives of other churches.

St. Bridget Llansantffraed with Llanarth



Llansantffraed takes its name from St. Bride or Bridget, or St. Ffraed in Welsh, a fifth century saint. Unfortunately, the rateable value of the whole parish has now risen substantially from its sensible value of £317 in 1891. In the fourteenth century this was the country seat and estate of Sir John Morley. Maud, daughter and heir of John Morley married Thomas ap Gwilym of Perth-hir, who was the fourth son of Gwilym ap Jenkins (or “Herbert”). Many of the famous Herbert family are buried in the churchyard.

The Church of St. Bridget of Kildare sometimes spelt and pronounced St. Bride or in Welsh Fraid, hence the name of this place Llansantffraed. Bridget was one of the most influential of the Celtic saints. She is one of the Patron Saints of Ireland along with St Patrick who was himself Welsh and St. Columba. Bridget was born in Kildare in the year 451 and was baptized by St. Patrick.

There has probably been a Christian church on this site since pre-Roman times as the Celtic Church predates the arrival of Augustine of Canterbury by many years.

St. Bridget Llansantffraed is a tiny church with a capacity for forty worshipers. The Sant Ffraed House wedding venue is next to the church, now independently owned. St. Teilo’s Church in Llanarth was closed in 2013 and the parishes were combined. The church has weekly services, with an average attendance, since Covid of 10 to 12 parishioners, alternating between 11:00am Eucharist and 3:00pm Evensong, other than if there is five Sundays in the month, when a combined group service is held.

The beautiful setting and vista of St. Bridget’s is ideal for holding special reflective services, and quiet days. We are fortunate to have toilet and small kitchen facilities, to allow many uses, both religious and secular. We affirm the ministry of both women and men: both lay and ordained. We strive to

be inclusive, collaborative, engaging, inspiring and accessible. We support the formation of Ministry Areas and are actively involved in working groups along with representatives of other churches. We see Ministry Areas as an opportunity and a realistic route to develop our faith and contribution to our wider community and to sustain our church life in this rural part of Monmouthshire.

The balance sheet for St. Bridget's year ending 2022, shows that the church is financially stable with reserves. The fabric of the church is well maintained. The Church Committee is keen to work with our new Team Vicar (and with our Archdeacon and Area Dean during the interregnum) to move forward and grasp the opportunities that present themselves in the future.

Until 2021 Llanarth, Branch of the Mothers' Union, was thriving, sadly this group has now closed with members transferring to other branches or becoming Diocesan Members.



St. Cadoc, Llangattock-juxta-Usk (The Bryn).



St. Cadoc's Church is at the southern end of the Llanddewi Rhydderch Pastoral District. As the name implies, it is near the river Usk (one field away). It is in the village called The Bryn which is on the south side of the A40 dual carriage way near Penpergwm and is bounded by the road, railway and river. Originally the course of the river was much nearer the church, drainage ducts in the southern wall of the churchyard are still evident.

The nave and tower date back to the 13th Century, but in 1827 and 1921 considerable changes were made to the Church. Internally, the floor of the church is lined with stone flags, several of which are tombstones of former parishioners. One of note is that of Rev Herbert Jones rector from 1613 – 1644 which is immediately in front of the communion table.

There is a 1620 Welsh Bible in a cabinet at the back of the church, there are also several ancient tiles on the west wall bearing the arms of Beauchamp. (William Beauchamp was Lord of Abergavenny in 1392) and we also have a Victorian Silver Chalice



We have a Eucharist at St Cadoc's on the second and forth Sundays at 3.00pm. The attending congregation is small but dedicated. Several parishioners no longer able to attend still contribute financially to the church.

On the approach to the village is Penpergwm House Care Home for the Elderly, which has recently acquired a minibus allowing residents to attend the weekly coffee mornings at the village hall. The Church committee would like to have a vicar who is sincere, friendly, and approachable who could encourage interest within the village and the surrounding area.

One residential Care Home- Penpergwm House- for the aged, who occasionally attend St. Bridget's morning service. Since church congregations have been able to meet again, the three churches have been having one combined Eucharist service at St David's on a fifth Sunday of the month.

North Monmouthshire Ministry Area Music ~ Keeping Music Live in Churches.

We see church music as a way of uniting our churches and scattered rural communities and the North Monmouthshire Ministry Area Music has been set up to facilitate this. NMMA Music has been created and organised by the organist at St. David's Church, Mr. Philip Norman and is an example of how the Ministry team are developing links between the individual pastoral districts. The Ministry Area Pop-Up Choir regularly take part in specific services throughout the Ministry area. However, this scheme is not limited by area or denomination. If people from outside the area wish to participate- they will be welcome. Similarly, if congregations from outside the Ministry Area wish to use these resources, they will be welcome to call upon our help. Additionally, this scheme is not restricted to Church in Wales congregations it is ecumenical in intention.

Across the Ministry Area there are organists, pianists, singers, choirs, instrumentalists, conductors, composers and arrangers. This is a resource for congregations to use on an occasional basis, some extra support for their music. They are able to make requests and musicians who are able to help can volunteer.

It is envisaged that, from time to time, musicians from the area will put on their own events (such as an Advent carol service, or a Lent meditation) both to offer music of a wider scope and to raise awareness of possibilities on offer. The purpose of NMMA Music is (as far as possible) to make live music available to congregations within the Ministry Area when or if they wish for it.

The Pop-Up Choir has recently sung at the following services:

- ❖ Licensing of the Revd David Roberts as Team Vicar in the Crucorney Pastoral District at St. Michael's, Llanfihangel Crucorney.

- ❖ Advent carol service in St. James', Llanvetherine.

- ❖ Commissioning of the NMMA at St. Teilo, Llantilio Crossenny.

- ❖ Baptism in St. Teilo, Llantilio Pertholey.

- ❖ Singers joined the Taizé Group at St. Mabili, Llanvapley for a service of meditation.

- ❖ Maundy Thursday Service at St. David's, Llanddewi Rhydderch, Good Friday Liturgy at St. Teilo, Llantilio Pertholey, and the Easter Vigil at St. Michael, Llanfihangel Crucorney.



Diocesan Vision

Our Diocesan Vision was launched in October 2022. We are encouraging Ministry Areas to work with five important 'branches' to help us to grow as Christians and to share God's love in the world and help to be part of growing His Kingdom.

The Vision:

- Is outward facing
- Provides Ministry Areas with five common themes on which to focus its life and work
- Helps us to focus and prioritise our resources and energy and use them to best effect

At the heart of our diocesan vision is the desire for God's church to grow and the belief that it can grow

Discipleship – Growing more like Jesus

Disgyblaeth – Tyfu mwy fel Iesu

'Disciple' comes from the Greek word that means 'to learn.' Focusing on our desire to proclaim the Good News we are encouraging Christians to grow in the faith by strengthening their relationship with God and with one another.

Stewardship – Living as thankful and generous people

Stiwardiaeth – Byw fel pobl ddiolchgar a hael

Stewardship is about recognising the gifts that we are given by God and considering how we use them. It is closely connected with the preaching of the gospel and the response to the gospel.

Environment – Caring for God's creation

Amgylchedd – Gofalu am greadigaeth Duw

Caring for God's creation is a fundamental part of our calling as disciples. The world is entrusted to our care and we are to use it wisely and fairly

Social Justice – Serving together to strengthen our communities

Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol – Cyd-wasanaethu i gryfhau ein cymunedau

Loving our neighbour means looking out for all, whoever they may be! It often means those who struggle to have their voices heard

Equality & Diversity – Welcoming all
Cydraddoldeb ac Amrywiaeth – Croesawu pawb

We are all made in the image of God. This branch calls us to recognise those who are missing from our church communities and to face the question of how we can build our common life, so we are truly welcoming to all people

For more details of the Vision go to:

[https://monmouth.contentfiles.net/media/documents/10925g -
_Faith_In_Our_Future_Brochure.pdf](https://monmouth.contentfiles.net/media/documents/10925g_-_Faith_In_Our_Future_Brochure.pdf)